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DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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WEST GERMANY IS OUT OF STEP

Hitler's Generals Sabotage "Atom-Free Zone"

The West German Government, backed by the nazi generals who run the new Wehrmacht, were revealed this week as the only serious obstacle to the creation of an atom-free zone which would ban all atomic weapons from the whole of northern and central Europe.

A round-up of the situation showed that West Germany was the only state in this area opposed to the idea of renouncing such weapons of mass destruction.

From north to south, the situation on the European map was as follows:

Norway and Denmark are opposed to the stationing of atomic weapons and rockets on their territory; Sweden is traditionally neutral and has no such weapons.

The German Democratic Republic has no atomic weapons stationed on its territory, and is willing to renounce all such weapons if West Germany will do the same. Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary have agreed to renounce their weapons if the two German states can reach such an agreement.

Switzerland and Austria are neutral, and have no intention of acquiring atomic arms.

Further south, Yugoslavia has indicated its readiness to join in a "bomb-ban" agreement.

Ten of the eleven states in a broad band running from the north to the south of the European continent are ready for such an agreement. The West German Government, and the old nazis and militarists who stand behind it, are the only obstacle.

Simple Recipe for European Relaxation

A simple recipe for obtaining a Germany free of the menace of atomic weapons was proposed by the East German People's Chamber on December 11th.

In an appeal addressed to the West German Parliament, the East German parliamentarians proposed that the two German Governments should get together to agree on the following points:

1. No atom bombs or their rockets, belonging to third parties, should be stationed or stored on German territory in east or west.

2. The two German states should renounce the making, buying or acquiring of atomic bombs or rockets.

3. The two German states should pledge themselves not to equip their respective forces with such weapons, irrespective of their origin.

4. The West German Government should prevail upon the western powers to withdraw any such weapons of mass destruction already stationed in West Germany.

The People's Chamber appeal pointed out that such an agreement would open the way to the establishment of a large atom-free zone in central Europe, since Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary had agreed to renounce the stationing and production of atomic weapons if both German states reached such an agreement. The appeal stressed that the relevant states could participate in such an atom-free zone irrespective of their existing treaty obligations to NATO or the Warsaw Pact.

The appeal stated: "The People's Chamber appeals to each individual member of the German Federal Parliament to be ruled in his decision on this problem exclusively by the vital interests of the German people, and the great responsibility for European peace which rests upon each German."

BULGANIN TO ADENAUER

Soviet Premier Writes to W. German Chancellor

Soviet Prime Minister Bulganin has written to West German Chancellor Adenauer, drawing his attention to the dangers of present West German policy, and proposing steps which could be taken to avert the danger.

Here are some of the main passages from Prime Minister Bulganin's letter:

We recall the assurance recently given by the Federal Government to the effect that it officially renounces atomic weapon production of its own and has not requested a delivery of such weapons from outside.

In connexion with the forthcoming meeting of the Atlantic Council, however, it is becoming ever more clear that the Government of the Federal Republic will go along with the decisions of the forthcoming N.A.T.O. meeting on this question. After all, it is generally known that such a decision cannot be taken without the agreement of the Government of the Federal Republic.

Most likely it is only concerned not to let its own role in the decision in the N.A.T.O. bodies come into the open, to stay in the background as far as possible, and to give the impression that it is merely bowing to the decision of its N.A.T.O. partners.

Anyone who claims that the positioning of foreign atomic bases in west Germany is supposed to be in agreement with the security interests of the German Federal Republic commits a dangerous error.

It is difficult to understand those politicians of the Federal Republic who do not want to see real facts and who blind themselves to the fact that the atomic bases in the territory of the German Federal Republic will, should it come to a warlike conflict, to a certain extent change into magnets which draw upon themselves the counter-blow of the modern military technique of the States defending themselves against the aggressor.

It must be stated plainly that to change the Federal German Republic into a launching base for American rocket weapons and to equip its armed forces with atomic weapons, as planned by the military leaders of N.A.T.O., would by no means make the German Federal Republic less vulnerable. On the contrary, the danger of an atomic war on its territory would only increase.

There is another side to the question which, one would think, the Government of the Federal German Republic should not disregard. It is quite obvious that the atomic arming of west Germany, which would bind it even more firmly to the North Atlantic block, could also bar the only way to reestablish the national unity of Germany which remains open today — an agreement between the two German States.

I should like to point out, Mr. Chancellor, that the Federal Republic to-day faces decisions which will determine its fate for many years to come, and that perhaps it may be too late to-morrow to realize much of what could be done to-day to avert a development of events undesirable for the cause of peace and for the interests of the German people . . .

. . . If at present not all nations are yet ready to proceed to disarmament the Governments should at least assume moral obligations in order to put a stop to the arms race and — while for the time retaining the present level of armaments — prepare the ground for further and more concrete steps in the sphere of disarmament.

In our view the creation of an atmosphere of confidence would be furthered by steps such as the renunciation by the States of the use of nuclear weapons and the use of violence in the solution of disputed questions, a non-aggression pact between the organizations of the Warsaw pact and the North Atlantic pact, and an end to war slogans and of mutually hostile propaganda between the States.

Its realization depends further on such an important measure, which brooks no delay, as the cessation of all kinds of tests with atomic and hydrogen bombs at least for two to three years.

The creation of a zone free of atomic weapons in the central part of Europe, which includes both parts of Germany, would also serve the interests of disarmament and a lessening of international tension.

If the U.S.S.R., the United States and Great Britain agree not to station their nuclear weapons in the territory of Germany, and the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the east German Democratic Republic take measures to this end, that there are no atomic weapons in Germany, neither German nor foreign, then the governments of Poland and Czechoslovakia in this instance are known to be ready to engage in agreements neither to produce nor to station such weapons in their territories.

The realization of such a measure would be a substantial contribution to the securing of peace and would free the peoples of the countries belonging to this zone from the danger of an atomic war.

I consider it necessary to draw your attention to the corresponding statements of the Soviet Government on its readiness to reduce its troops in Germany, or to withdraw them from Germany as well as from other countries where they are present in accordance with the Warsaw Treaty, if the armed forces of the United States, Great Britain, and France are withdrawn from the territory of the Federal Republic and other N.A.T.O. partner countries.

GERMANS DIE IN ALGERIA

AVIS de DECES

N° 28615 FC-7/BC

6 AVR 1957

NOM FRAEDRICH

Prénoms Rudi

Grade Légionnaire

Corps 5ème Régiment Etranger d'Infanterie

Date et lieu du décès 23 Mars 1957 au DJEBEL FILAOUSSENE(Algérie)

Cause du décès : en service commandé

Adresse de la personne à prévenir Madame FRAEDRICH Frieda à PENKUNLAND - Brandebourg (Allemagne)

On the left you see a photostatic document the like of which has come fluttering into quite a number of East German letter boxes in the past few months.

The document, dispatched from the office of the French Secretary of State for the Ground Forces, is nakedly headed "Notice of Death", and is the first and only notification received by Mrs. Frieda Fraedrich, in the little village of Penkunland in East Germany that her son Rudi Fraedrich had been killed on active service with the French Foreign Legion in Algeria.

Young Rudi Fraedrich, like quite a lot of other young people in East Germany, had run away to seek "adventure" in West Germany. There he was recruited into the French Foreign Legion and sent to Algeria to die in the dirty war against the Algerian people.

Many thousands of young Germans, from both East and West Germany, are known to be serving in the French Foreign Legion. The West German authorities have made no serious efforts to prevent recruiting agents for the legion from going about their business; the East German Parliament, however, passed special legislation on December 11th, making it a penal offence to attempt to induce persons to leave the Republic for service in a mercenary army such as the French Foreign Legion.

(More details on new legislation on this and other subjects are given below.)

NEW E. GERMAN LEGISLATION

Illegal Emigration Now Punishable

Important new legislation covering emigration from the German Democratic Republic, anti-state activities, and new milder ways of dealing with minor offenders was approved by the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic on December 11th.

An amendment to the passport law made it a punishable offence for citizens to leave or attempt to leave the territory of the German Democratic Republic without the necessary exit permit. Punishment for the offence was fixed at up to three years imprisonment, or a fine. It was emphasised that the new ruling made no alteration in the position of persons travelling abroad or to West Germany with the usual passports or permits: the new regulation was aimed only against persons leaving Democratic Germany illegally.

The new legislation governing anti-state activities comprised a codification of offences previously punished under Article 6 of the constitution of the German Democratic Republic. This article of the constitutions has been criticised in the past as a "rubber paragraph" which did not define clearly enough the various categories of crime.

The new legislation, consisting of amendments to the criminal code, defines precisely the various categories of crime, ranging from espionage through sabotage down to relatively minor offences such as slandering the state. A special paragraph of the new legislation deals with the activities of persons who attempt to induce citizens to leave the Republic.

The new legislation on the punishment of minor offenders introduces a form of probation for persons sentenced to terms of imprisonment of up to two years, and also introduces a completely new form of punishment, a "public warning" for other classes of minor offenders.

"Unreconstructed" West Germany

A public opinion poll recently carried out by the Demoscopic Institute in West Germany shows that anti-Semitism is still strong there.

A cross section of the West German population were asked the question: "Would it be better for Germany if there were no Jews here?". 26% of those asked replied "Yes", 33% thought it made no difference, 17% were undecided, and only 24% thought it would be better if the Jews remained.

In reply to further questions, 49% of those asked were opposed to the idea of naming a school after a member of the anti-nazi resistance movement, and 42% believed that Hitler would have been the greatest of all statesmen if it had not been for the war.

CRUSADE TO TELL TRUTH

West German Schoolbooks Ignore Hitler's Crimes

The West German liberal newspaper "Frankfurter Rundschau" recently called for a "crusade" to tell West German children the truth about the Hitler period.

Julius R. Kaim, commenting on the present position in an article published on December 7th, pointed out that teachers had no suitable textbooks on which to base their lessons. Most school history books now available paid little attention to the nazi period; the main emphasis was laid on the Second World War and events were presented in much the same way as those of the Seven Year's War or the Franco-Prussian War. Only a very few attempted to bring out the horrifying nature of the nazi regime.

Of course, it was the teacher's job to provide the details. "One teacher in North Germany did try to do this, telling his pupils what he thought about the SS state and everything connected with it — its brutality and the bestial maltreatment, lawlessness and horror of the death camps, its foreign policy which led to total war, the madness of a war leadership which led to the total collapse of the German Reich and destroyed the confidence of the world in the German people," the writer stated.

"He thought he had done a good job. But not a bit of it! There were fathers and mothers who were quick to protest and to accuse him of being unpatriotic and a victim of communist infiltration. They insisted that the nazi regime had not been all bad."

That young people themselves, however, were deeply concerned with recent history could best be illustrated by the following quotation from the Frankfurt schoolchildren's paper, "Blitzlicht":

"A little while ago I went to a discussion of the French film 'Nuit et Brouillard'. We young people kept quiet; only the grown-ups talked. They talked about the necessity of force under the greatest leader of all times, tried to prove that accounts — supported by original documents — of events in German concentration camps were inspired by hate propaganda, and kept on repeating their claims that they personally had had nothing to do with excesses. We still said nothing, and one father even claimed that young people could not possibly have anything to say, because they knew nothing about all this. Besides, he added, why can't we forget about the Jewish question after all these years."

A well-known Hamburg philologist, speaking on the subject at a conference in September this year, had said it was frightening and shaming that young people in West Germany knew and understood so little about this period of their history, and he did not believe that they were themselves to blame for their ignorance.

"If teachers of goodwill had the right textbooks" Julius Kaim concludes, "containing all the factual material about these terrible years, so that nobody could pass over what was written down in black and white, they could and must give young people the right picture and the right background."

(A full analysis of some of the neo-nazi history books used in West German schools was printed in GERMAN REPORT on September 28th, 1956. Copies of this issue can be sent to any reader interested, ed.)

"W. Germans Oppose Missiles" — Says Dick Crossman M.P.

"As an American I can tell you now that we've got things sewn up here in Bonn. The Adenauer government is going to give us all the missile bases we want. But Dr. Adenauer will wait until the German people have protested long enough and are ready to accept another accomplished fact."

When I heard this from a U. S. diplomat in the West German capital today I thought he was talking too big. But since then I have checked his claim with the British Embassy here, and also with prominent German politicians from the Opposition as well as from Dr. Adenauer's party.

They all confirm his view that Dr. Adenauer will once again compel a protesting German people to toe the American line.

Public opinion is still violently opposed to the kind of purely military reaction to the Russian Sputnik which will be proposed to the NATO conference in Paris in ten days' time.

Very few Germans want to see American missile bases in their country.

Even fewer want their own army to be integrated into a NATO force and equipped from a common pool with atomic nuclear weapons.

They are far more interested in reunifying their country than they are in taking their share in the nuclear defence of NATO. And it is obvious that if West Germany is integrated into a NATO nuclear defence system, the chance of reunifying Germany becomes even more remote. This is why the two most talked of men here today are George Kennan and Aneurin Bevan.

The lectures which Kennan, the famous American ex-diplomat, has giving each Sunday on the B. B. C. have aroused for more excitement here than the Russian Sputnik — for the simple reason that the Germans are so self-centred that they have no interest in anything which does not concern them directly.

There was a thrill when Mr. Kennan gave his support to the Gaitskell plan for neutralising Central Europe by a simultaneous withdrawal of American and Russian troops.

This week the excitement reached its climax when Mr. Kennan declared that it would imperil chances of peace to arm Western Germany or any other European country with nuclear tactical weapons.

Having heard this attack from a great American expert on the American policy that Adenauer supports, Germans can hardly wait to hear it all over again from Mr. Bevan when he flies over here next week to deliver two well-timed addresses in Bonn and Berlin . . .

Every thoughtful German I have met agrees with Mr. Kennan's and Mr. Bevan's strictures on the Anglo-American plan for countering Sputnik. Yet the Adenauer government will support the plan in order to keep in the Americans' good books. So will every other NATO government.

That is why the role of the Labour Opposition at Westminster is so critical. It is the only Opposition capable of expressing the protest of thinking people in every NATO country by an effective challenge to the Eisenhower-Macmillan plan.

("Daily Mirror" London, December 6th)

"Covent Garden Should be Shamed"

Covent Garden Opera in London should be shamed that two operas by a British composer had their world premieres in the German Democratic Republic, declared music critic Thomas Russell in the London "Daily Worker" on December 9th. The critic wrote:

"I have just been looking through a programme of the Deutsches Nationaltheater, Weimar, where Goethe worked and where Liszt made musical history.

"The programme is of Alan Bush's 'Men of Blackmoor', with its working class story of North of England coal miners. Last season, this opera had 25 performances in that theatre, a total any British composer would envy anywhere.

"This season the sister theatre at Jena is putting on this opera for 18 performances, and the composer will conduct a considerable number of them.

"This production follows the success of Bush's first opera "Wat Tyler" in Leipzig in 1953, an opera of which we in England have only been tantalised by a one-dimensional performance from the BBC.

"Covent Garden should be shamed at this operatic exile, happy though it is for Bush himself. But this composer insists on choosing plots which clearly illustrate the class struggle.

"This does not commend him to the powers-that-be. It will not prevent him from ultimately gaining the honour he deserves in his own country."

Minister to Yugoslavia Named

The government of the German Democratic Republic has appointed Frau Lore Staimer as first Minister to the Yugoslav Federal People's Republic. Frau Staimer, who was formerly Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade, is the daughter of Wilhelm Pieck, President of the German Democratic Republic.

Indonesian Students Invited to Democratic Germany

Indonesian students at present studying at Dutch universities can continue their studies in the German Democratic Republic if this becomes necessary, it was officially announced in Berlin on December 11th.

An official government spokesman said that in addition the Indonesian Government had been informed that Democratic Germany was ready and willing to expand trade relations between the two states, and to extend to Indonesia all possible help in the framework of what was economically feasible.

BERLIN'S DEAD END KIDS

New Film Packs Cinemas

The divided Berlin of today has its Dead End kids, like any other city, and this is the subject of a new East German film, "Sheriff Teddy", which is packing cinemas throughout the German Democratic Republic.

The film is based on a book by Benno Pludra, one of the most popular children's authors in East Germany. It is the first full-length film of young director Heiner Carow.

Thirteen year-old Kalle Becker, who has been the leader of a street gang in West Berlin — hence the title — transfers to an East Berlin school when his parents move over the sector frontier to get a better job. The film gives an extraordinarily vivid picture of the sort of "Dead End" kids who live in the poorer districts on both sides of the sector frontier and of Kalle's difficulties in adjusting himself to his new school.

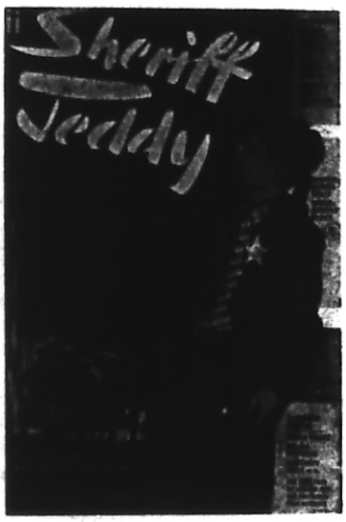
Kalle has some pretty hair-raising adventures — splendidly filmed by Goetz Neumann — in forsaken cellars, backyards and ruins of the sort of No Man's Land between East and West Berlin.

In school he soon gets a reputation as a tough little rebel who always has a good supply of "blood and thunder" paper-backs stuffed inside his jacket. He is always ready to start a fight; but the film manages to show what a lonely little fellow he really is, and how his whole background gets in the way of his budding friendship with Andreas, the only boy in his class who can stand up to him. When it comes out that the speedometer he has given Andreas for his bicycle was stolen from the school supply cupboard, everybody turns against him and poor Kalle is so ashamed that he runs away to his brother Robert in West Berlin, and begins a life of petty crime.

But Andreas does not forget him. He finds out that Kalle is being bullied by his gangster brother to break into a co-op warehouse and steal perlon stockings which can then be sold at a comfortable profit in West Berlin.

There is an exciting chase through gloomy, wet back streets — Andreas with his cycling pals tracking down Kalle and the three gangsters — and a quite terrifying fight, with knuckle-dusters and no holds barred, before the police step in and take them all off to the police station for investigation.

The background music — specially composed for the film by Guenter



Klueck — and the acting are excellent. You can see these children any day on the Berlin streets, and you might meet Kalle's teacher, Herr Freytag, in any East Berlin school.

A brief scene between Kalle's father and Herr Freytag indicates that Herr Becker had no other reason for moving to East Berlin than to get a better job. He has no interest whatever in his children, has made a complete mess of bringing up his elder son Robert, and is now well on the way to beating the sense out of Kalle too. Kalle's mother also appears briefly, as one of those long-suffering creatures who seem to make no impression on their children either. The film shows without many words the tragic results of the brutality and indifference of all too many parents.

The solution offered here — that Kalle's friend Andreas succeeds in helping him out of an impossible situation — makes a wonderfully exciting and appealing story and has a definite appeal for some children, but it is hardly to be recommended as a universal remedy; the problems are much too big and too dangerous to be left to the children themselves. In his book Benno Pludra recognises this, of course; Kalle has to be sent for a time to a home for juvenile delinquents.

Grown-ups appear little in this film; nevertheless it is a very definite reminder that parents and teachers must get much closer to children and do much more to help them in these difficult times.

Joan Becker

WATER FOR WOGGERSIN

How a Village Helped itself

Town and industrial planning are at present swallowing up the major part of investment funds in the German Democratic Republic, and there are still a number of outlying districts which have no proper water supply. But with a little push and enterprise the local mayor or some other energetic person can often find a way out of the difficulty.

This is what happened in the village of Woggersin in Mecklenburg, where the only running water had been in the former local landowner's house and farm buildings. Villagers had always fetched their water in pails from the pump on the village green.

They were still doing this in the spring of 1957 — in fact, no attempt had been made to improve things until then, because the village was regarded as a sort of stepchild and had been listed successively under five different local administrations, none of which had felt called upon to make big improvements.

But by this time the major of Woggersin had had enough. He went to see the captain of a People's Army unit stationed near Woggersin, who arrived one Sunday in May to see what could be done. Then things began to move. An engineer from a nearby waterworks planned the piping system in his spare time without taking any fee, and then borers from the Teterow works did the necessary boring, free of charge as part of their experimental work.

When the boring was finished, Captain Renner appeared in September with a heavy crane shovel, accompanied by ninety soldiers of his People's Army unit; workers of the Neubrandenburg Insurance Office, some members of the Neubrandenburg district Socialist Unity Party office and a number of villagers turned out to help. They got nearly all the necessary trenches dug in the next two days; later on a mechanics' brigade from the People's Army came along to help lay the pipes and the whole job was finished early in November.

There are now six hydrants scattered through the village. This is already a tremendous help, but it will of course be some time before water can be laid on in the separate houses.

The whole piping system would have cost over 100,000 marks if it had been done by an engineering firm, but as it is, the actual cost of piping and other material was only 15,000 marks, and even this sum was provided out of profits from the local football pools.

The villagers of Woggersin know now how to go about helping themselves, so it will not be long before they find a way to get their much-needed paved road through the village.

J. B.

The State & The Church

"Neues Deutschland" on Recent Friction

A great deal has been written recently in western papers about church affairs in East Germany. The following are points from an article in "Neues Deutschland", organ of the Socialist Unity Party, expressing the party's views on the subject:

The situation of church leaders in the German Democratic Republic has in fact become more complicated since Dibelius (leading Protestant Bishop, ed.) and Adenauer signed the agreement on religious service for the troops serving with NATO and thus created a military church.

But we have not complicated the situation. Complications arise solely from the fact that some church leaders in the German Democratic Republic feel bound by directives issued in West Germany. At a time when West Germany has become the main base of an aggressive NATO and is to be built up as a rocket base, these people — having dedicated themselves to a NATO policy — clearly have no freedom of decision.

Some church leaders were in the USA recently. Bishop Dibelius even reported "in detail" to Eisenhower in person on the present situation in the German Democratic Republic, worked out with NATO politicians a concept of struggle "against the new political world order" in the socialist countries, and proclaimed the "struggle against communist materialism". Has all this anything to do with religion?

Dibelius received payment for his attitude before he left the USA, in the form of US dollars to the value of 230 million marks. He needs this money for his "struggle", ie., his work against the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and Poland. But this is work in support of NATO, which is dedicated to political murder and atomic war. Even the people who finance NATO would hardly suggest that it contributes to harmony and peace amongst the people.

Various church dignitaries are attempting to intervene in the carrying out of the secular youth dedication ceremonies. But the church really has nothing to do with these. Nobody interferes with confirmation classes. Youth dedication is a general ceremony, for all young people, the preparation for which is of value to all. Nobody is compelled to take part. But on the other hand the church cannot be permitted to exert moral or other pressure on children to make them attend confirmation classes.

Church members have the right to proclaim their religious views within the framework of the church and nowhere in the German Democratic Republic have attempts been made to hinder this activity. On the other hand, those who are supporters of a dialectical materialist philosophy also have the right to proclaim their views. During the last ten years the church has spread its religious views very widely and by various methods. This could unfortunately not always be said of dialectical materialists.

We notice that Adenauer's paper, "Der Tag", is not satisfied with "Neues Deutschland"s opinion that the Soviet Sputniks have proved "that no sign of the existence of a Creator has been discovered". We cannot understand why "Der Tag" is so agitated about this. It ought to be their job to prove the existence of a Creator. Why not let the American Sputnik — once it gets started — establish radio communications with the Creator? In case of success we shall be delighted to report in detail about it.

You Ask – We Answer

EAST GERMANY'S PARTIES

"Is the Communist Party the only Party allowed in the German Democratic Republic, or do you have a variety of parties? If there are various parties, do they all have seats in Parliament?"

D. G., Sydney, Australia

There are five political parties in the German Democratic Republic, but a number of mass organisations such as the trade unions and youth organisations are also represented in Parliament. All these various parties represented. All these various parties represent the interests of different sections of the population, but they work together in a coalition organisation called the National Front for the main aim they all have in common: the building of a decent, peaceable Socialist Germany. Here is a short sketch of the various parties and other organisations represented in the People's Chamber, the central parliament of the German Democratic Republic.

1. Socialist Unity Party

The Socialist Unity Party, which is by far the largest of the five parties, was formed in 1946 by a fusion of the Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party in what was then the Soviet Occupation Zone. The Socialist Unity Party fraction in the People's Chamber consists of 117 members. Leading members of this party include the veteran Communist Wilhelm Pieck, a former carpenter who is now President of the Republic; Otto Grotewohl, printer and former Social Democrat, who is Prime Minister; and Walter Ulbricht, Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of the party.

2. Liberal Democratic Party

The Liberal Democratic Party, which holds 52 seats in the People's Chamber, represents liberal middle class interests. Prominent members of the party include party chairman Dr Hans Loch, a lawyer who was forced to emigrate from Germany during the Hitler period, and who is now Deputy Prime Minister; and Dr Johannes Dieckmann, who was a leading member of the liberal German People's Party before Hitler, and who is now Chairman of the People's Chamber.

3. Christian Democratic Union

The Christian Democratic Party describes itself as the party of Christians of all confessions who reject the old policies of fascism and war. It holds 52 seats in the People's Chamber. Prominent members of the party include party chairman Otto Nuschke, journalist and pre-Hitler parliamentary representative of the German Democratic Party, today a Deputy Prime Minister; and Luitpold Steidle, former officer who joined the anti-nazi "Free Germany Movement" and is now Minister of Health.

4. National Democratic Party

The National Democratic Party represents the interests of private business people, shopkeepers and tradesmen. The party holds 52 seats in the People's Chamber. Prominent members include Dr Lothar Bolz, a lawyer who was forced to emigrate during the nazi period, who is now Foreign Minister; and Dr Wilhelm Feldmann, a lawyer, now Minister for Light Industry.

5. German Peasants' Party

The German Peasants' Party, which has 52 representatives in the People's Chamber, represents farmers in parliament. Prominent members are party chairman Ernst Goldenbaum, who spent most of the nazi period in concentration camp; and Paul Scholz, also a veteran of nazi concentration camps who is today Deputy Prime Minister.

6. Free German Trade Union Federation

The trade union federation is the largest organisation in the German Democratic Republic, with over five million members. 53 union representatives sit in the People's Chamber, including chairman Herbert Warnke, veteran trade union organiser forced to emigrate by the nazis; and Rudolf Kirchner, printing worker, who is vice chairman of the union federation.

7. Free German Youth

The Free German Youth has 29 representatives in the People's Chamber. Chairman of this parliamentary fraction is Edith Brandt, a former cook, who trained as a teacher after the defeat of nazism.

8. German Women's Federation

The Democratic Women's Federation is represented in the People's Chamber by 29 members. Chairman of the federation is Ilse Thiele, a former typist; chairman of the parliamentary fraction is Wally Keller, former bus driver.

9. Society for the Democratic Cultural Renewal of Germany

This cultural society, which unites intellectual workers, has eighteen representatives in the People's Chamber. Prominent members include Johannes R. Becher, revolutionary poet who is now Minister of Culture; and Arnold Zweig, world famous writer and President of the German Academy of Arts.

10. Peasants' Mutual Aid Association

The peasant mutual aid association, which plays a big part in the cooperative movement in the countryside, has 12 representatives in the People's Chamber.

73% Against Atom Bombs

Seventy-three percent of the West German population are opposed to the arming of the West German Wehrmacht with atomic weapons, according to a public opinion poll carried out by the EMNID Institute. A breakdown of the figures shows that 59% of those asked were against such arming under all circumstances; 14% were opposed with some reservations; 13% were in favour of atomic weapons, and 14% were in favour with reservations.

In reply to a second question, 74% of those asked expressed their opposition to the stationing of rocket weapons in West Germany.

Obituary

Gerhart Ziller, one of the Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party, committed suicide on December 14th in an attack of depression, it was announced in Berlin. Gerhart Ziller, one of the leading industrial experts of the Socialist Unity Party, was formerly Minister for Engineering. He joined the Communist Youth movement in 1927, at the age of 15, and spent most of the nazi period in prison and concentration camp.

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Fritz Grosse, veteran Communist and member of the Collegium of the Foreign Ministry of the German Democratic Republic, died after a long illness on December 12th. Fritz Grosse fought in the ranks of the Soviet Red Army against foreign intervention in 1920, and later became secretary of the German Young Communist League. Under Hitler he spent eleven years in prison and concentration camp.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

The text for our sermon this week will be taken from the "Times", that peculiarly British Bible of the "Top People". For readers outside Britain I should explain that the "Times" has been running an advertising campaign describing itself as the paper which the "Top People" read. I have read it regularly for more years than I like to remember: now I have the comfortable assurance that I am a top person.

But to return to our text. The "Times" on December 4th carried this report from its usually very capable Bonn correspondent:

"The central council of the Jewish organisation in Germany complained today of the return to public life here of former leading Nazis. Though this assertion is frequently made, the council gave no evidence.

"Hundreds of thousands of people who were fairly prominent in the Nazi Party are certainly doing well now and are accepted socially, and many officials are serving just as loyally as they did under Hitler.

"It has been left to the east German authorities, who also employ individuals who served under Hitler, to provide the charges. A recent attempt to show that all members of the new Bundestag were Nazis failed to impress. Another claims to provide evidence that 118 judges and public prosecutors who were employed in Hitler's special courts now have similar appointments in the judicial system of the Federal Republic. They are alleged to have been responsible for the death of more than 400 people, but no allied agency or western German body seems to be showing any interest."

First of all, before plunging into details, I should like to commend the "Times" correspondent for bringing this matter to public attention once again, even if he does it in a slightly crab-like fashion.

No Evidence?

Now for the details: The Jewish Central Council complained of nazis in public life but produced no evidence. The correspondent makes it almost sound as if they had no evidence to produce: but I can only assume that they produced no evidence on this occasion because they regarded it as a fact self-evident to even the blindest. Hard documentary evidence by the bushel is readily available; I will not weary readers by repeating it all here — it is only necessary to mention the case of Dr. Hans Globke, today Chancellor Adenauer's closest adviser, who wrote the nazi commentary to the infamous anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws.

Now let us proceed to paragraph three: "The east German authorities, who also employ individuals who served under Hitler . . ." This sentence is of course perfectly true, but the implication which it contains is false. It would be quite impossible to run any sort of German administration without "individuals who served under Hitler", since it is a sad but undeniable fact that the overwhelming majority of the German people either gave their active support to Hitler at the height of his power, or at least continued to serve him without protest.

Real Nazis

But there is a vast and very real distinction between employing in responsible positions leading active top-rank nazis and SS men (that is the position in the West German state today), or employing former nominal nazis who have shown by their work and their public statements that they have rejected completely any links with nazi thought or practice. The East German Government is headed by men who were tortured and persecuted by the nazis. It should be obvious that they would not give unreconstructed nazis any positions of responsibility.

Just incidentally, this charge of "leading nazis working in East Germany" has popped up time and time again in western publications, but no evidence for the charge has ever to my knowledge been produced. Harking back to 1954, we find for instance that the Board of Deputies of British Jews passed a resolution deprecating the growth of neo-fascism in West Germany, but adding: "In East Germany a similar position obtains, in that several well-known nazis are Ministers in the East German Government."

This was a very serious charge, and I wrote to the Board of Deputies asking for details of the charges, and the names of the alleged nazi Ministers. In the course of a protracted correspondence, most of which was published in GERMAN REPORT between March and May 1954, I only received the very unsatisfactory reply: "In the circumstances we feel it would be inadvisable to publish names and other details." If anyone has any such evidence, it is high time that it be produced.

Now back again to the "Times" article. "A recent (East German) attempt to show that all members of the new Bundestag were Nazis failed to impress." On the one hand I am glad to see that the "Times" correspondent in Bonn reads his GERMAN REPORT regularly, since this is apparently a reference to the short biographical details of West German parliamentarians published in recent issues of this paper. He should read it a little more carefully, however, since we never made the ridiculous claim that "all members" were nazis. What we did state, in GERMAN REPORT for October 25th 1957 was: "A preliminary survey shows that at least half of the members of Chancellor Adenauer's parliamentary coalition parties were either members of the nazi party, nazi officers during the war, lawyers who served the Hitlerite state, or businessmen who did very well out of the war."

Space is running short, so on to the next point, the charges made against judges and public prosecutors who served in Hitler's special courts and now have similar appointments in West Germany. The "Times" correspondent appears to give rather guarded acceptance to this charge, and adds slightly dispiritedly "no allied agency or West German body seems to be showing any interest."

And in this connection I have a positive suggestion: if no official body is showing any interest, why should the "Times" correspondent not take the matter up himself, in the good old fighting spirit which has sometimes in the past been a feature of the best journalists?

If he would care to drop by this office the next time he is in Berlin I shall be glad to help him to see the original nazi files on any of these judges that he cares to select: and if he is still sceptical about the documentary evidence then he can go and visit the judges in their chambers in the West German courts where they are working today and get their confirmation. It would have the makings of a fine series of stories.

Muck

Just for a light-hearted footnote, I should like to mention that a brand of cigarettes has now appeared on the East German market under the charming name of "Muck". The word is pronounced "Mook" in German, and has no humourous implication, but I hope that nobody here ever exports any of these cigarettes to an English-speaking country.

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